THE

NEW-YORK

Missionary Magazine,

AND

REPOSITORY

OF

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOR OCTOBER, 1803.

ABRIDGED REPORT

OF THE DIRECTORS OF THE

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT THEIR NINTH GENERAL MEETING,

May 11, 12, 13, 1803.

The Directors of the Missionary Society, apprehending that some account of their operations and prospects may be expected on these occasions, in order to excite a spirit of praise and prayer, offer the following Extract from the Annual Report to the Society at large.

As the mission to Otaheite was that which first engaged the attention of the Society, so it has continued to be the subject of their particular care. By the arrival of the Royal Admiral, in July last, intelligence was received, that the nine Missionaries, sent out in that vessel had reached the island in good health, and were cordially received both by the brethren and the natives. At that time a general meeting of the Chiefs was expected; and painful apprehensions of its consequences were entertained, as a spirit of disaffection to the chiefs had already discovered itself. By a letter lately received, we learn that a civil war had actually broken out, which exposed the brethren to imminent danger; from which however, they were delivered by the seasonable interposition of Divine Providence, in the arrival of two English ships; for, by the assistance of our countrymen, Pomarre, the king's father and principal chief,

was enabled to obtain very important advantages over the insurgents, after he had been twice defeated by them, and nearly brought under the necessity of abandoning the island. The immediate occasion of this disturbance, was the seizure of a billet of wood by the chief Otoo, from the inhabitants of Attahooroo; which billet they worshipped as their supreme divinity.—The loss sustained by the Missionaries in their gardens, fences, and cultivated grounds, was considerable; but they inform us, that the work of preaching the gospel continues; and that the Lord so over-ruled the disorders of the island, that several hundreds of the natives obtained an opportunity of hearing the word of salvation in consequence of them. One circuit thro' the country had been taken just before the insurrection took place, and the gospel was preached in every district but one. "In the midst of darkness and perplexity," say they, "we sometimes enjoy a gleam of hope, that God is humbling the people, and preparing them for a general reception of his word."—Otoo himself had desired to hear the word of Jehovah; and assembled many of his subjects for that purpose. He seems to have some idea that there is but one God; and expresses no dislike to what he heard. The Society acknowledges the good hand of God in his protection of the Missionaries on this occasion, and anxiously hope to receive information of the restoration of tranquillity, and the progress of the gospel in that country. It is satisfactory to erflect, that this station has already become of considerable importance to the colony of New South Wales, in supplying its increasing population with salt provisions; and by means of the intercourse which takes place between the two countries, the security of the brethren, as well as their estimation, among the natives, is likely to be promoted.

We have two amiable young men, named Maydon and Oiy, about sixteen years of age under the care of Dr. Okeley, of Mirfield in a Moravian school. They have given pleasing evidence of improvement in the letters they have written, and the report received from Dr. Okeley; and promise to be useful helpers to our Missionary brethren, and a blessing to their countrymen whenever they return to their native land; which we hope will not be very long delayed.

We proceed, in the next place, to give a general idea of the Missions in Africa.

About three years ago, brother Manenberg, and others, were sent by this Society to Africa; where they were taken

under the immediate protection of the South African Society. Brother Manenberg was appointed to labour among a congregation of Christians at Cape-Town; and also to attend to the instruction of the Heathen, who are more numerous there than at any other place in the colony. Here his labours have been abundantly blessed, especially to the conversion of many of the Hottentots.

Our next Missionary station is at Stellenbosch, about twenty miles from Cape-Town, and under the care of brother Bekkar. This devoted servant of Christ having formerly resided in that place, and being much affected with the deplorable condition of the Heathen, offered himself for the Missionary work, and has been successfully engaged in it. He has opened a school for the native children, about thirty of whom are instructed in it: and it appears that several of the poor Heathen have joyfully embraced the Saviour of sinners.

Bastian Tromp, another native of Holland, sent out by this Society, began to exercise his ministry, about two years since, at a place called Waggon-makers' Valley. Here he met with great opposition from some mistaken persons, who misrepresented his mission to the Governor, and would gladly have suppressed it; but General Dundas was so well convinced of its beneficial tendency, that he gave him protection and encouragement. This faithful Missionary has continued to labour among different sorts of people—the Hottentots, Boschemen, and slaves from Mozambique; in some of whom he hopes he perceives the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Missionary Kicherer is settled at Zak River, about nineteen days journey from the Cape (300 miles); where there is reason to hope that his labours have been blessed; as also in several other places where he itinerated. He is assisted by a young man, whose conversion to God is the fruit of his ministry, and to whom he is affording such instruction as may qualify him for future usefulness among the Heathen.

Another Missionary station is at Graaf Reinet, where a considerable number of the natives hear the word of life from brother Vanderlingen. Here a piece of ground has been given to the Society by the Commissioner Maynier, a distinguished friend and protector of the Missionaries.

An English Missionary, of the name of Anderson, has been for more than two years eminently zealous and dili-

gent, especially near the Great Orange River. He has preached to great numbers of the Heathen of different nations; many of whom intreated that the word of salvation might be declared unto them. They behave in an affectionate manner to brother Anderson and his interpreters; and many of them had begun to learn to read. Some also give reason to hope that spiritual impressions had been made on their minds. It afforded the Directors peculiar satisfaction to learn, that two commissioners, who had been appointed to survey and report the state of the colony, had visited this station, and expressed to government their persuasion, that the exertions of the Missionaries would prove the most powerful means of civilizing the natives, and tranquillizing the colony.

There are two other individuals employed in the good work in Africa; one named Vester a native of Holland, the other a native of Mozambique, who had been sold as a slave; but being converted, under the ministry of Mr. Vos, late of Rodesand, has discovered an earnest desire to be instrumental in the conversion of others: he is favoured with strong intellectual endowments, which, being now under a sanctified direction, are likely to be rendered extensively useful. He has been placed under the care of the Missionary Society at the Cape, that he may be prepared to accompany other Missionaries to the populous regions of Mozambique.

Our much revered and faithful brother, Dr. Vanderkemp, continues his apostolic labours in the Missionary field. He has removed from his former station at Graaf Reinet, to Algoa Bay, on the eastern coast, where a Missionary settlement seemed highly desirable, as likely to bring together a great number of the natives, and to accelerate both their civilization and religious instruction. Such was the probable importance of this attempt, that it gained the most cordial approbation of Governor Dundas, who was pleased to honour Dr. Vanderkemp with great assistance in the execution of his plan. The missionary Read, a very distinguished young man, is united with the Doctor in his labours at Algoa Bay.

We have the pleasure of stating, that the Missionary Society at the Cape continue to exert themselves with unabating energy in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom among the surrounding Heathen. They persevere in their prayer-

meetings for this purpose, which they hold in a large building erected for that use; and are about to establish a Missionary Seminary. A similar institution is forming at Stellenbosch.

With heartfelt delight we announced our persuasion, that, through the instrumentality of this Society, many thousands of the Heathen in Africa are now listening to the joyful sound of the gospel; and that more than a few, who were afar off, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. A considerable number of the rising generation are under beneficial instruction, and forming for useful stations in civil society. An energy, before unknown, is observable in many of the Christian people; a desire to hear the gospel prevails among multitudes of the Heathen; and our Missionaries are already engaged in preaching to tribes of men, whose name had scarcely reached us. Two more Missionaries are about to depart from Holland; men who have relinquished the enjoyments of civilized society to visit Africa; and spread, in regions almost unknown, the sweet savour of the name of Jesus.

The faithful labours of Mr. Hillyard, in Newfoundland, have not been in vain. Twenty-eight persons have been formed into a religious society; and about thirty young persons appear to be under spiritual concern.

Two missions have been established in North-America. Mr. Bentom, who is settled at Quebec, assures us, that there are some precious souls, whose pious conduct obliges him to believe that they have been brought out of darkness into light by his means. Mr. Mitchell, also at New Carlisle, in the Bay of Chaleur, informs us, that the work of the Lord continues to prosper in the midst of opposition. Two praying societies have been formed amongst them; and great attention paid to the rising generation.

During the two past years the Society has manifested the commendable desire of endeavouring to build, on the ruins of the papacy in France, the divine edifice of pure Christianity; and as the most powerful mean for that purpose, within their reach, was the circulation of the holy Scriptures, they determined to consecrate a part of their funds to this object. Reflecting also on the awful effects of infidelity, they judged it might be of great use to connect with the Scriptures a vindication of their divine authority. This important service has been atchieved in the most satisfactory manner, by one of their highly respected members.

The treaty of peace between the two countries having renewed the means of personal intercourse, it was concluded, that a deputation to France was of great importance, not only in determining on the best mode of printing and circulating the New Testament and the Essay, but also in procuring such information on the state of religion in that country, as would enable the Society to form a judgment on the best means of promoting the interests of true religion there. The result of this visit is generally known, and has produced a hope that the Protestant cause may soon rise from its ruins. The Directors have now the pleasure to announce, that the New Testament, the Essay, the Assembly's Catechism, and some Tracts, are printed, and now in circulation in France, and will shortly be so in Italy. The necessity of publishing the Scriptures in those countries is proved, from the great difficulty which the deputation found in procuring a single copy of them at Paris; and they are informed that this is equally the case in Italy.

The deputation having fully ascertained, that an energetic and evangelical ministry would be likely to be well attended and supported in France, they conceived that the establishment of a Protestant church at Paris would be productive of the most beneficial effects. The Rev. Mr. Tracy, who was then there, was requested to continue on the spot, to superintend the publications, and to make enquiries respecting a suitable church. Information has been obtained, which proves the almost unlimited extent in which the Scriptures and Protestant writings may be circulated. At Besencon, in the south; and at Arras, in the north, where, till lately, no Protestants were to be found, applications for Protestant ministers and churches have been made, and signed by 12,000 persons at the former place, and nearly as many at the latter;—and although many churches have already been given to the Protestants, 900 congregations are still destitute, both of churches and pastors. Even in Belgium, the same disposition appears.

Such are the extensive prospects which Providence has opened; but, in proportion to the magnitude of the object, is the necessity of prudence in the pursuit of it; and as the measures of the Directors must be regulated by the political relations of the two countries, they wait for further light upon this interesting matter, and pledge themselves, that it shall meet that degree of attention which is consistent

with the general concerns of the Society, and especially with that regard to the Heathen world which is its most prominent and appropriate object.

Having stated the measures which have been taken during the last year, we shall briefly specify the objects which are upon their hearts to pursue hereafter.

The Seminary at Gosport, under Mr. Bogue; and that at Rotterdam, under the care of the Society there, contain the principal instruments at present in view to be employed in future missions. In the former, there are eight individuals devoted to the service of our Lord; one of whom is adapted for the communication of evangelical instruction in France, others in India, and one to the Jews. Of those in the Rotterdam seminary, some are qualified to strengthen the missions in Africa, others to introduce new ones in the island of Ceylon. The inhabitants of this great island (upwards of 100,000) who bear the Christian name, and have been for several years destitute of religious instruction, were relapsing into heathenism; but the Lord has inclined the heart of brother Ringeltaube to seek out those wanderers, and bring them back to his fold.

It will, doubtless, occur to those who take a suitable interest in the concerns of the Society, that the accomplishment of these great and numerous objects will, unavoidably, occasion a very increased expenditure of its funds:—indeed, the disbursements of the last year have greatly exceeded the income; it is therefore earnestly hoped, that the bare intimation of the necessities of the institution, will produce that spontaneous liberality, which will render a more impressive address on this subject unnecessary.

The Directors cannot conclude without expressing their satisfaction in the persuasion, that a just concern for the honour of the Redeemer, in the conversion of the Heathen, appears to increase among Christians; and their humble hope that it will gradually diffuse itself among all the churches, and produce the most beneficial effects. With sincere satisfaction they recognize the zeal and success of other societies aiming at the same stupendous object, earnestly uniting their common supplications, with the Christian world at large, that the blessing of Heaven may attend them all. They cherish the hope that these are all effects of a Divine impulse on the mind, and a part of the arrangements of an infinitely wise and unerring plan, which has deter-

mined the ultimate renovation of the world after a long season of darkness, depravity, and disorder, and is now introducing the dawn of that glorious period which is the favourite theme of prophecy, and the grand consolation of the Christian church. While we endeavour to promote the approach of this desirable season by every means in our power, we cheerfully refer the event to Him who has reserved the times and the seasons in his own hands; who presides over the vast concerns of the universe; and who can command all its powers, intellectual or material, to accomplish his pleasure and fulfil his word.

EXECUTION OF THE EARL OF DERBY.

The Earl of Derby, according to an order of the court martial, by which he was sentenced to die at Bolton in Lancashire, was brought to that town with a guard of horse and foot, on the 15th of October, 1651, betwixt twelve and one o'clock, the people weeping, praying, and bewailing him all the way from his prison at Chester to the place of his death.

He was brought to a house in the town near the cross, where the scaffold was raised; and as he passed by, said, Venio, Domine, *I am prepared to fulfil thy will, O my God: this scaffold must be my cross; blessed Saviour, I take it up willingly, and follow thee.* From thence going into a chamber with some friends and servants, he was advertised by the commander in chief, that he had till three of the clock allowed him to prepare for death; for indeed the scaffold was not ready, the people of the town and country generally refusing to carry as much as a plank, or strike a nail, or lend any assistance to that work; their cry being generally in the streets, "O sad day! O woful day! shall the good Earl of *Derby* die here? Many sad losses have we had in this war, but none like unto this; for now the ancient honour of our country must suffer here!" And to add to his trouble, most of the timber that built the scaffold was of the ruins of *Latham* House: but nothing could alter his Lordship's resolution and courage; for with a stedfast, composed, and cheerful countenance, he called the company which were present to prayers with him, wherein he shewed admirable fervency, and a kind of humble importunity with Al-

mighty God, that he would pardon his sins, be merciful to his soul, and be gracious to this land, in restoring the king, laws, and liberty; and that he would be a husband to his wife, a father to his children, and a friend to all that suffered by his loss, or had been friends to him.

Rising from prayer, he sat down with a very pleasing countenance, and assured the standers-by, that God had heard his prayers, which the blessed spirit of God witnessed unto him in the present comforts he now felt in his soul: then he entered into a discourse of his life, and beseeched God to forgive him the days and time he had mis-spent; and said, it was his comfort, that although he had not walked so circumspectly as he ought to have done, yet he ever had a sense of his sins, and a tender respect to all the services, servants, and ordinances of his God; and that he knew God had mercy for him, that he had strengthened and comforted him against all the terrors of death.

After these and some other words to this purpose, he desired his friends, and the people by, to pray with him again, which when he had ended, rising from his knees, he appeared fully satisfied of a gracious return to his prayers, and never after shewed any sadness in his countenance.

His next business was with his son the Lord *Strange*, whom he publicly charged to be dutiful to his sad mother, affectionate to his distressed brothers and sisters, and studious of the peace of his country: *but especially*, said he, *son, I charge you, upon my blessing, and upon the blessing you expect from God, to be ever dutiful to your distressed mother, ever obedient to her commands, and ever tender how you in any thing grieve or offend her: she is a person well known to the most eminent personages of* England, France, Germany, *and* Holland, *noted for piety, prudence, and all honourable virtues; and certainly, the more you are obedient to her, the more you will increase in favour with God and man.*

Then he desired to be private in the room himself: where he was observed to be about half an hour upon his knees, with frequent interjections of groans and sighs before his God. Then, when he called the company in again, his eyes witnessed to us, that he had abundantly mixed tears with his prayers. He told us, that he was very willing to leave the world, being assured by the testimony of God's spirit, that he should be carried from trouble to rest and peace, from sorrow to joy, from life to death; and that

death had no bitterness in it to him, but that it took him from his dear wife and children, whom he humbly commended to the protection and providence of a better husband, and a better father; and that yet he did not doubt, but that the General, and they who sat in the seat of authority, would make provision for them, hoping that his death might satisfy all those who sought his life, whom he freely forgave, and desired God to do the like. Then calling for his son, he took his leave of him, and blessed him. It would have grieved any one's heart, though ever so hardened, to see the parting of him now with his son, and the day before with his two daughters, Lady *Catharine*, and Lady *Amely Stanley*, upon the road betwixt *Chester* and *Bolton*.

This ended, he called the officer, and told him he was ready. In his way to the scaffold the people prayed, and wept, and cried aloud: to whom his Lordship, with a cheerful countenance and courteous humbleness, said, *Good people, I thank you, and I beseech you still pray for me, and our blessed God return your prayers back into yaur own bosoms. The God of mercy bless you, the Son af God establish you in righteousness, and the Holy Ghost fill you with all comforts.* Coming near the scaffold, he looked up, and said, *God, I thank thee; I am not afraid to go up here, though I am to die there; there are but these few steps to my eternity.* Then kissing the ladder, he went up, and saluted the people, and walked a turn or two upon the scaffold: then went to the east end of the scaffold, and pulle doff his hat, again saluting the people with a cheerful countenance, and spoke as follows:

"I am come by the will of my heavenly father to die in this place: and I thank God, I do with all willingness and readiness submit to his most blessed will. As for my crime, as some are pleased to term it, which was objected against me by the council of war; my crime, I say, though I hope it deserves a far better name, was, that I came into my own country with my own lawful king. I came in obedience to his Majesty's call, whom, by the laws both of God and of this land, I am bound to obey. So if it be my crime, I have confessed it again before God, angels, and men; that I love monarchy as the best government, and I die for the love and honour I bear to my master, Charles the Second, whom I myself, in this country, proclaimed king. The Lord bless and preserve him, and incline the hearts of

those that have power in this nation to accept him to his father's throne with honour and peace. As for my being in arms in the beginning of this war, I profess here, in the presence of God, before whom, in a few minutes, I must make account of this profession, I only sought for peace, and to maintain the laws and settle the king my master in his just rights; and now by his enemies I am adjudged to die by new and monstrous laws which make me an enemy to my country for fighting for my country; a traitor to the laws for endeavouring to preserve them.

" *But, O God! give me grace to consider him who suffered such contradiction of sinners; and, O my God assert the king to his father's throne, assert the laws to their former honour, and restore thy own religion in its purity; that all these shadows and false pretences of religion may vanish away, and our children's posterities may serve thee in spirit, and in truth.*

" Good friends, I die for the *king*, the *laws* of the land, and the *Protestant Religion* maintained in the Church of *England;* all which, as I was ready to maintain with my life, so I cheerfully suffer for them in this welcome death. I am sentenced to death by a council of war, after quarter for life, and assurance of honourable and safe usage by Captain *Edge.* I had reason to have expected the council would have justified my plea, which hath been ancient, honourable, sacred, and inviolable, until this time that I am made the first suffering precedent: for I dare affirm it, that never gentleman before, in any *Christian* nation, was adjudged to death by a council of war after quarter given. I am the first, and I pray God I may be the last precedent in this case. I must die, and I thank God I am ready for it: death would now be my choice had I the whole world in competition with it. I leave nothing behind me which I much care for, but my king, my wife, my children, my friends, whom I trust the never failing mercies of my God will provide for: I beseech God shew mercy to those, who neither had mercy nor justice to me. My blessed Saviour taught me by his example and command, both to pray for my enemies, and to forgive my enemies: I forgive them freely, even those that contrived my ruin, and pursued me to death. I thank God I never personally offended them to my knowledge in my life, and let me not offend against them at my death: I forgive them freely, and pray God for Christ's sake to forgive them also.

" Of my faith and religion I shall not, I hope, need to say much; herein I hope my enemies, if now I have any, will speak for me. I profess my faith to be in God only, from whom I look for my salvation through the precious merits and sufferings of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; which merits and sufferings, I hope, are applied to my soul by the blessed spirit of comfort, the spirit of God, by whom I am assured, in my own soul, that my God is reconciled unto me in Jesus Christ my blessed Redeemer.

" I die a dutiful son to the Church of *England*, as it was established in that blessed prince my late master's reign, which all men of learning and temperance will acknowledge to be the most pure and agreeable to the word of God, and primitive government, of any Church within twelve or thirteen hundred years since Christ, and which (to my great comfort) I left established in the *Isle of Man;* God preserve it there, and restore it to this nation.

" And, O blessed God, I magnify thy name, that thou gavest me the happiness and mercy to be born in a Christian nation, and in a nation where thy truth was professed in purity. With honour to thy name, and comfort to thy people, I ascribe the comforts of thy holy spirit, which I feel in my bosom, to the ministry of thy word and sacraments conveyed unto me in thy Church, and made effectual by the operation of the same blessed spirit. In this faith I have lived, and in this I die: pray for me, and the God of mercies hear your prayers for me, and mine for you."

His speech was interrupted by the violence of the soldiers, who, for what cause is not known, suddenly rode up and down, cutting and slashing the people, killing some and wounding many.

Presently after the tumult was over, his Lordship called for the headsman, and asked to see the axe; and taking it in his hand, said, *Friend, I will not hurt it, and I am sure it cannot hurt me;* and then kissing it, said, *Methinks this is as a wedding-ring, which is as a sign I am to leave all the world, and eternally to be married to my Saviour.* Then putting his hand in his pocket, said to the headsman, *Here, friend, take these two pieces, all that I have; thou must be my priest, I pray thee do thy work well and effectually.* Then handling the rough furred coat the headsman had on, *This,* says he, *will be troublesome to thee, I pray thee put it off, and do it as willingly as I put off this garment of my flesh, that*

is now so heavy for my soul. Then some of the standers-by bade the headsman kneel and ask his Lordship's pardon; but he did not and was surly and crabbed: but his Lordship said, *Friend, I give thee the pardon thou wilt not ask, and God forgive thee also.* Then turning up his eyes to heaven, said aloud, *How long, Lord, how long?* Then gently passing over the scaffold, and seeing one of his chaplains on horseback among the people, *Good Sir*, said he, *pray for me, and the Lord return your prayers into your own bosom, and I pray remember me kindly to your brother, and God remember him for his love to me and mine.*

Then turning towards his coffin, *Thou art*, said he, *my bridal chamber, in thee I shall rest without a guard, and sleep without soldiers.*

Then looking towards the block, he asked, if all were ready: *That*, said he, *methinks is very low, and yet there is but one step betwixt thee and heaven;* then turning his eyes to the people, he saluted them, and desired again their prayers; saying, *I see your tears, and hear your sighs, and groans, and prayers. The God of heaven hear and grant your supplications for me, and mine for you, and the mediation of Christ Jesus for us all.*

Here his Lordship caused the block to be turned, that he might look upon the Church, saying, *Whilst I am here I will look towards thy holy sanctuary, and I know that within a few minutes, I shall behold thee my God and King in thy sanctuary above; under the shadow of thy wings shall be my rest, till this calamity be over-past.* Then he pulled off his blue garter and sent it to his son, and pulling off his doublet, with a very religious cheerfulness, he said, *I come, Lord Jesus, and O come thou quickly, that I may be with thee for ever.* Upon this he said, *Pray tell me how I must lie; I have been called a bloody man, yet truly I never had the curiosity to see any man put to death in peace;* then laying himself down on the block, after a few minutes he rose again, and caused the block to be a little removed; then said to the headsman, *Friend, remember what I said to thee; and be no more afraid to strike than I to die; and when I put up my hand, do thy work.* So looking round about upon his friends and the people, he said, *The Lord bless you all, and once more pray for me and with me;* at which words he kneeled down, and prayed privately within himself, with great sighing, about half a quarter of an hour, concluding

with the Lord's Prayer; then rising up again, he said, (smilingly) *My soul is now at rest, and so shall my body be immediately. The Lord bless my king, and restore him to his right in this kingdom, and the Lord bless this kingdom, and restore them to their rights in their king, that he and they may join hand in hand to settle truth and peace; and the Lord bless this country, and this town, and this people. The Lord comfort my sad wife and children, and reward all my friends with peace and happiness, both here and hereafter; and the Lord forgive them who were the cause and authors of this my sad end and unjust death; for so it is to mankind, though before God I deserve much worse: but I hope my sins are all bathed in the blood of Jesus Christ.* So laying his neck upon the block, and his arms stretched out, he said these words:

Blessed be God's glorious name for ever and ever. Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, amen.

At which words he gave the headsman the sign; but he either not observing it, or not being ready, stayed too long, so that his Lordship rose up again, saying, 'Why do you keep me from my Saviour? What have I done that I die not, and that I may live with him? Once more I will lay myself down in peace, and so take my everlasting rest.' Then saying, *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*, he stretched out his arms, and gave the sign, repeating the same words:

Blessed be God's glorious name for ever and ever. Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, amen.

Then lifting up his hand, the executioner did his work at one blow, all the people weeping and crying, and giving all expressions of grief and lamentation.

ON THE MOST PROBABLE

SUBJECTS OF CONVERSION.

I HAVE frequently heard it advanced, That a profligate sinner is more likely to become the subject of conversion than one of a more decent and moral cast. But I think the sentiment is supported neither by scripture nor general observation, and that it is pregnant with pernicious and dangerous consequences. The ground of the opinion has generally been, that a moral man, if unconverted, is necessarily a self-righteous man, and as such more hard to be cou-

vinced of his sins than an open and profligate sinner. But this argument appears in every view fallacious; for first I conceive, that a profane man is likely to be as much under the influence of a self-righteous spirit, natural to all, as a more moral man. I admit, indeed, that a moral man may, and generally does, make a righteousness of his defective morality. But the grossest sinner will do the same; he will labour to bring the law of God down to his own standard, however low: in the absence of all positive goodness he will pride himself on his negative merit, and where both fail, substitute a name of religion, or even a descent from a pious ancestor in the place of true religion; and to these delusory pleas he will adhere with so much pertinacity as makes it very difficult to convince him of the evil of his ways. No man, indeed, can be in the habit of sin in any degree, but, in that degree, his heart becomes hard, his conscience seared, his views of the evil of sin and of the law of God low and inadequate; and he who thus reduces the obligations and extent of the law of God, can easily suppose himself capable of performing a righteousness commensurate with them.

A text frequently adduced in support of the sentiment in question is, Matt. xxii. 31, "Publicans and harlots, &c." Now the very turn of the expression here used evinces, that these are characters by no means the most likely to embrace the Gospel, yet that there are those who are *even* more averse to it than they. But who are these? Such as, like the Pharisees of old, who were in general gross hypocrites, are under the influence of principles of a tendency still more fatal. Mr. Henry observes on this passage, "An *hypocrite* is more hardly convinced than a gross sinner;" and surely an hypocrite is a more abandoned character than the grossest sinner who makes no profession of religion. The text, therefore, no more proves the point for which it is adduced than it would have done had it declared, that even publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before assassins.

The Pharisees of old were at once hypocritical and self-righteous; and from this latter circumstance it has probably arisen, that the term Pharisee has been applied to all descriptions of persons who bear this one mark of resemblance to them, however in other respects they may differ from them; and the name being once applied, all the scriptures which mention it are readily applied too.

Let us consider a moment the tendency of the sentiment in question. There was a time when the profligate sinner, though born of the principles of corrupt nature, had not run into that habit of profligacy in which he is now involved. Was he then in a less desirable state, or less likely to become the object of divine grace than at present? If so, he has done well that he has gone so far into iniquity, and he will do well to continue therein, for on the absurd hypothesis we are now examining, every step he takes brings him probably nearer to God. And what in this case, is the awful dilemma in which a minister of the Gospel stands? From the minister of righteousness he must become the minister of sin, and do evil that good may come; for when he cannot convince a moral man of his sins, it appears to be his duty, in order to place him in the most favourable situation for conversion, to bring him off from self-righteousness by persuading him to practice grosser sins. If one degree should not succeed he must be taught to proceed to a greater, till he arrives at the highest pitch of presumptuous iniquity.

This argument might also be illustrated from the nature of the moral government of God. Allowing the fullest exercise to the divine sovereignty, would it not appear to reflect on the conduct of a moral governor, in selecting the objects of mercy from a world of rebels, to choose *principally and for the most part* such as were the most atrocious and abandoned. It might evidently comport well with his wisdom, equity, and goodness, to select *some* such, as an encouragement to others to return to their allegiance; and to hold out this great lesson, that no degree of sin will be a bar to the restoration of the sincere penitent to the favour of God; but it by no means follows, that the profligate sinner has any advantage for becoming a true penitent. The matter might also be safely referred to the impartial observation of every individual.

We have not here adverted to the power of the Holy Ghost, which alone is equal to the conversion of the most decorous, as well as the most profligate sinner, because it will be admitted not to belong to the argument; the conversion of both being alike easy to divine power*. All for which we

* It may, however, be worthy of enquiry, whether the sentiment in question does not take its rise in underrating either the evil of "spiritual wickedness," or the power of the holy spirit in convincing the mind of them equally with sins of a grosser nature.

contend is this, that there are gradations in sin; that every step we take in its course takes us farther from God and nearer to destruction; and that it becomes us to be very cautious how we indulge the thought ourselves, or hold it out to others, that a state of great and aggravated sin is attended with any advantage for the reception of divine grace, or, which appears nearly the same thing, that it is proper to continue in sin, that grace may abound. J. L.

ON THE

RESPONSIBILITY OF MEN FOR ERRORS

ARISING FROM PREJUDICE.

PREJUDICE consists, says Dr. Johnson, in judgment formed before-hand without examination. In order to include all its shades and degrees, it might, I think, be better defined to be judgment formed in whole or in part without due examination. It is acknowledged to be a most general and fruitful source of error, and if it were allowed to be universally a legitimate excuse for the errors to which it gave birth, a very great proportion of those who embrace false systems and opinions would be sheltered from responsibility: Prejudice might be pleaded in favour of the great mass, probably of Socinians and Arians, but certainly, I think, of Roman Catholics, Mahommedans, and Idolaters; for the number of those, who profess to adopt principles in religion which they *know* to be false, or who adopt false principles from real inability, through a natural defect of understanding, to discover their falshood, is probable very small, compared to the number who are misled by prejudice.

In order to discover whether prejudice is ever a just excuse for error, it is necessary to enquire; whether it may ever be said to be itself innocent. If innocent, its natural and necessary effects will be so also; but if always criminal, it is clear that the errors, which arise from it, must partake of its nature.

Men are led to embrace opinions without due examination—1st. By thoughtlessness, and a want of attention and scrutiny.—2ndly. By following the guidance of inclination and passion rather than that of reason.—3rdly. By undue deference to authority. These then are the sources of prejudice, and they must be separately considered.

1st. If thoughtlessness and a want of attention to evidence, and of industry in searching for it, were allowable pleas, multitudes who "live without God in the world," and refuse to listen to the Gospel of his Son, would have a very sufficient excuse to offer. Nothing can be more clear, than that all are bound to make a good use of the faculties which God has given them. If men, therefore, form opinions, and adopt principles, on light grounds, when they have ability and opportunity for more satisfactory investigation, they cannot be acquitted of blame, and are justly chargeable with the errors into which they have been led by their negligence.

2ndly. But supposing the mind to turn earnestly to the subject of enquiry, much will depend on the temper with which it approaches it. It is evident, that whoever, is desirous of deciding wisely, must reason calmly, and keep out of sight as much as possible, during the process of investigation, both his wishes and feelings. Numbers, however, instead of endeavouring to emancipate themselves from their influence, when examining principles of conduct, take them for their guides, and make little use of reason but to defend and vindicate the conclusions to which these guides lead them. Now, except it be allowable to pervert the faculty of reason, and thereby to be guilty of a greater abuse of the divine bounty, than he was, who hid his talent in a napkin, such a procedure cannot be innocent, nor consequently the errors to which it leads. This is true even when the best affections are indulged to the degradation of reason. When the worst are suffered to assume the reins, and lead the understanding captive, the guilt is of course prodigiously aggravated.

But even when the predominant wish is not, as in the case which has been considered, to indulge inclination, but to discover the truth, and to avoid every thing likely to bewilder and mislead in the search after it, the affections of the heart will generally interfere more or less in the province of reason, and often in so great a degree as to lead to very important prejudices and errors.

Even in the most sincere and devoted servants of Christ, the conquest over the lusts of the flesh is gradual. Sin, it is true, no longer *reigns* in their mortal bodies; but, though conquered, it perpetually rebels, and disturbs the exercise both of holy affections and of reason. In the first periods

of a Christian life, and at those times, in its subsequent stages, when temptations have more than usual power, it generally happens that some prejudices and false opinions are discoverable, which may be distinctly traced to this source; and though like the remains of corruption from which they spring, they may be compatible with a state of grace, yet no one can suppose them to be devoid of guilt.

But the Christian is liable to be misled in his reasonings, not only by unhallowed affections, but by those which are more spiritual. The eyes of a good man are often blinded by his love of public worship, and of Christian society. His love of these almost necessarily attaches itself strongly to the *mode* of worship to which he has been used, and to those Christian friends who have gone hand-in-hand with him in his religious course; and this attachment is frequently so great and so partial, that, with a sincere wish to be fair and candid, he can scarcely see any faults in either the one or the other, or any very attractive merits in other modes of divine worship, or in Christians of other denominations. It would be easy to shew by familiar instances, that parental and conjugal love, the love of a people for their minister, and other amiable affections, even when brought "into subjection to the obedience of Christ," are very commonly pregnant sources of prejudice. Scripture affords many instances in point. What prejudiced Moses against the office God assigned him, of going to his countrymen as a deliverer? Chiefly, as it should seem, his humility. What induced Peter to call in question the propriety of the divine command, to kill and eat of the animals let down to him in the great sheet in his vision? His love of that system of purity, which his God, whom he loved, had established. What led the disciples of Christ so long to question and disbelieve his declarations, that he should suffer death and rise again? Their warm love for their divine master was a leading cause of their unbelief.

The young and the sanguine, especially while Christian affections are yet new to them, are apt to give the reins to their feelings. They are but imperfectly aware how necessary it is, that they should be restrained when reason is called upon to investigate and decide; and the restraint is so irksome to them, that, imperfect as their theory may be on this point, their practice is far more imperfect: nay it is not uncommon to meet with persons of this description, who ap-

pear almost to assume a merit from not being *able* to do their duty in this respect. They are so impressed with the loveliness and value of holy affections, that they are disposed to be pleased with *every thing* which tends to prove their reality and warmth in their own bosoms; and nothing appears to do this in a more striking manner than an inability to restrain such affections. If, however, they continue true to their God, his spirit by degrees corrects these irregularities; order and harmony triumph more and more over discordance and confusion in the inner man; and the unsteady and meteorlike splendours of uncontrouled affections are exchanged gradually for an uniform and genial sunshine of soul, which, though less brilliant, is far more potent in its operation; and, instead of dazzling, guides and cheers its possessor.

It surely would be too much to say, that prejudices of the class which has been last under consideration, are blameless. If they were, it would not be a duty (as it clearly is) to strive against them. Though the least criminal perhaps of any, they must be ranked among those "secret faults," from which we ought to pray daily to be cleansed.

3rdly. Those prejudices, which may be ascribed to undue deference to authority, are next to be considered.

A great part of human knowledge rests on authority as its proper basis. History, in all its branches, whether of past or of present times, can have scarcely any other foundation. In matters of science also, and in almost all subjects which require much research, the great mass of mankind can neither obtain knowledge, nor form opinions, but (chiefly, if not entirely,) on the ground of authority. If, therefore, in settling points of duty, an improper reliance is not placed on this source of knowledge, nor on the opinions derived from it; and if recourse is had to such other means of information as are accessible to the enquirer, all is well. No more than a proper and legitimate use is made of authority, and a man is not responsible for the errors into which it may lead him: indeed, opinions so formed and held ought not to be denominated prejudices. The examination on which they are founded forms a basis sufficiently broad for their support.

But reverse the case, and the conclusion, as to the responsibility of the individual, must be reversed also. An opinion which rests on a blind, or undue, deference to au-

thority is evidently destitute of a just foundation; and, if erroneous, the error is chargeable on those who entertain it. Their criminality will vary according to circumstances, and vary very greatly; but still, under all circumstances, they must be pronounced guilty of not having made a proper use of their reason.

Thus, prejudices having their rise in thoughtlessness and want of attention, or in the influence of passion or inclination, or in an improper deference to authority; the errors to which they give birth, though by no means all equally culpable, yet all bear the stamp of criminality more or less deeply impressed*.

"What a severe judge have we here," cry some of your readers, Mr. Editor, "he would condemn all the world." And it is, Sir, because the world is so ready to acquit herself, even when laden with guilt, and because true Christians are so frequently seduced by her into a degree of acquiescence in some of her false maxims, that I think it necessary to trouble you on this subject.

Is it necessary to shew to what extravagant and ridiculous lengths the world pushes her false candour, in what regards the conduct of men towards their God? She will allow a man to be of what sect he pleases; to be a Socinian, an Antinomian, a Roman Catholic, a Gentoo, or even to be of no religion whatever, and she will be most liberal in her apologies for him, provided he will but let her alone. If he disturb her quiet by endeavouring to point out her faults, and to propagate his own opinions, he immediately falls under her condemnation; but let him only abstain from this, and she will repay the civility by pronouncing all his errors void of guilt. To support the honour of God, and the right of his sovereignty, "is not in all her thoughts."

But if the world is thus disposed to "call evil good" when she does not conceive her own interests to be concerned, let Christians be on their guard against the contagion of her example. While they watch over themselves with a holy jealousy, and are exact "their own defects to scan," let them cherish a warm love for all their fellow-creatures, and entertain as favorable an opinion of others as circumstances will admit: but, at the same time, let them steadily

* The above remarks may serve to guard from misconception or abuse an allusion to errors arising from prejudice, which appeared in the very able paper of your respectable correspondent J. M. Vol. I. p. 758.

maintain right principles in their full extent, and never compliment man by softening down any part of the law of God. [*Chr. Obs.*

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

FIRST RIPE FRUITS,

BEING A COLLECTION OF TRACTS,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TWO SERMONS.

By the Rev. JOHN M. MASON, A. M. New-York; with a short Memoir of the Author.

THE strange title which is given to this volume, we have no doubt, will prove attractive to a certain description of readers: it operated differently upon our minds, producing a disinclination to go beyond the title page. This prejudice, however, we acknowledge to have been unreasonable; for, on a perusal of the work, we found it to reflect credit on the author as an orthodox divine, an acute reasoner, and an able declaimer; and to bear the marks of a strong and vigorous mind, deeply imbued with piety.

We cannot help wishing, that the editor, whoever he is, had also spared the memoir which stands in front of this collection; not because we think Mr. Mason unworthy of the praise bestowed upon him, but because we are decidedly of opinion, that the practice of publishing biographical sketches of the living, a practice which we are sorry to say gains ground among some classes of religionists, ought to be proscribed as improper and hurtful. These animadversions, however, respect the editor and not the author.

Nearly one half of the volume consists of a series of letters written to prove the duty of a frequent attendance at the Lord's table, in which the author ably and successfully combats the unreasonable prejudices which have prevailed in the Scotch Church on this subject*. A funeral oration on the death of Washington is a flowery piece of declamation; but the tract which we prefer, both on account of the closeness

* We could not help smiling at an instance of the power of prejudice in the author himself, while he is combating the prejudices of others. "We," says he, speaking of the Presbyterian Church, "reject in a mass the corruption of Popery, and of *her ape prelacy*."

of the argument and the vigour of the composition, is a *warning* addressed to Christians on the election of a president. Here the author establishes, by evidence too strong to be evaded, the *infidelity* of Mr. Jefferson, which was denied by his political adherents; and calls upon his fellow Christians, in a strain of bold and manly eloquence, to do their duty to their country and to their God by opposing his pretensions. It is a proof, we fear, of the low state of religion in America, that Mr. Mason's warning voice should have been disregarded; and that Mr. Jefferson, one of the acts of whose administration has been to invite and welcome the arch infidel Paine to the bosom of his country, should have been chosen president.

In the two sermons, if we make allowance for a style excessively florid and rhetorical, and for occasional vulgarisms (possibly Anglo-Americanisms*) there is much to please and to edify. The one entitled "Living Faith," is a very impressive piece of practical divinity. It was preached before a society, in Edinburgh, for the relief of the destitute sick. The following extract from it will afford a specimen of the author's style, and of his power over the feelings of his audience.

"This evening presents you with an opportunity of shewing that faith worketh by love. The society, on whose account I address you, carry, in their very name, a resistless appeal to the sentiments of men and of Christians. Devoting their labours to 'the relief of the DESTITUTE SICK,' they have sought out and succoured, not here and there a solitary individual, but scores, and hundreds and thousands of them that were *ready to perish*. Sickness, though softened by the aids of the healing art, by the sympathy of friends, and by every external accommodation, is no small trial of patience and religion. But to be both SICK and DESTITUTE is one of the bitterest draughts in the cup of human misery. Far from me be the attempt to harrow your feelings with images of fictitious woe. Recital must draw a veil over a large portion of the truth itself. I barely mention that the mass of sorrow, which you are called to alleviate, appears in as many forms as there are affinities among men.

"Is there in this assembly a father, the sons of whose youth are the stay of his age, and the hope of his family?

* e. g. "let us *test* this dogma by plain fact," "at an infinite *remove*," "an act of *naked* trust," &c.

In yonder cell lies a man of grey hairs, crushed by poverty, and tortured by disease. His children are scattered abroad, or have long since descended into the tomb. The sound of 'father' never salutes his ear: he is a stranger in his own country: his only companions are want and anguish.

"Is there here a wife of youth encircled with domestic joys? or is there one whose heart, though solaced with a thousand outward blessings, calls back the aching remembrance of the loved relation? Behold that daughter of grief. The fever rankles in her veins. She has no partner, dearer than her own soul, on whose breast she may recline her throbbing head. Her name is WIDOW. Desolate, forsaken, helpless, she is stretched on the ground. The wintry blast howls through her habitation, and famine keeps the door.

"Is there a mother here, whose eyes fill in the tenderness of bliss, while health paints the cheeks of her little offspring, and they play around her in all the gaiety of infantine simplicity? I plead for a mother, the toil of whose hands was the bread of her children. The bed of languishing destroys her strength, and their sustenance. 'The son of her womb' turns pale in her feeble arms, her heart is wrung with double anguish, while, unconscious of the source of his pain, he cries for bread, and there is none to give it.

"Is there here a man of public spirit, who exults in the return of plenty and of peace? (Nov. 1801.) Let him think of those who suffer under the stern arrest of hunger and disease. Let him think that this wretchedness belongs to the wife and family of the soldier, who has fought the battles of his country. The messenger of peace arrives: the murmur of the crowd swells into ecstacy: their shout echoes through the hills. She raises her drooping head and hears not that her friend and helper is at hand, but that herself is a widow, and her children fatherless. The blood of her husband, and of their father, has flowed for the common safety. He shall never return.

"Is there a Christian here, who knows how to *do good unto all, but especially to them that are of the household of faith?* Among these afflicted, who are sinking under their infirmities and *have not where to lay their heads*, are some to whom the celestials minister, and who are *fellow heirs with Christ in glory.* I state the facts: I use no arguments: I leave the result with your consciences, your hearts, and your God."

Religious Intelligence.

REPORT

OF THE

STANDING COMMITTEE OF MISSIONS, &c.

(Concluded from page 360.)

PERHAPS it may not be improper to mention, that seasons of special prayer, for the success of the gospel, have been recommended by the Assembly, and observed by many of their congregations; that there is reason to believe that a prayer hearing God hath graciously regarded, and answered the petitions of his people.

Having thus given a short statement of the missionary undertaking, as far as the immediate influence of the Assembly is concerned, we will now very briefly notice the other institutions, of a similar kind, in the United States.

1. The Synods of Virginia, of Pittsburgh, of Kentucky, and of the Carolinas, are all employed in this important work. These Synods are connected with, and under the care of, the Assembly. But, from local circumstances, it has been judged expedient that they should manage the missionary business separately from the Assembly*, and some of them have manifested a most commendable zeal in the cause. From the western commission of the Synod of Virginia nine missionaries were sent forth during the last year. Three of these have gone to the Indians. They have also sent a young man, of pious character, among the heathen, to instruct them in agriculture, and to make instruments of husbandry for their use. The commission of Synod are likewise instructing a native Indian youth, who has lately become pious, with a view to his being an interpreter, and in due time a preacher of the gospel among his people.

The friends of vital piety will probably be gratified by our departing from our main purpose here, so far as to state

* At the last meeting of the Assembly, the synod of Kentucky, at their own request, were connected with the General Assembly in the business of missionaries.

that in the bounds of these synods, comprehending parts of the States of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, there has been for some time past, and still continues to be, one of the most wonderful displays of divine power in the conversion of sinners, that perhaps has been witnessed since the Apostolic age. We cannot go into a detail of particular circumstances. But the appearances are astonishing, and the effects of the work have already been such as to put a new aspect on the state of society. Many thousands, it is hoped, have been added unto the Lord, as well as to his church.

2. The missionary society of New-York. This was instituted in the year 1796. Its design is to gospelize the heathen; and it confessedly owes its origin to the spirit which, for some years past, has been manifested in Europe to carry on this great and benevolent enterprize. They have considerable funds. One of their missionaries, with his son as a school-master, is permanently established among the tribe of Chicasaw Indians, and with some prospects of success. There are, indeed, eighteen persons in all, who have gone out with the mission, and who are expected in various ways to co-operate in carrying its design into effect. This society have likewise sent a mission among the Seneca Indians, by whom he was received with great cordiality. When the missionary returned, the Indians sent a request to the society to be farther instructed, and also that some of their own youth might be taken, and educated so as to be able to teach their countrymen both the principles of the Christian religion and the arts of civilized life. This society, in a word, promises to be extensively useful.

3. The Northern missionary society. This was founded in the year 1797. They have likewise made laudable exertions to promote Indian missions. They have made preparations for sending a minister of the gospel and a schoolmaster, to the Oneida nation, or tribe. They have considerable funds: and the Indians themselves have made a donation of land to the society.

4. The missionary society of Connecticut. This was instituted in the year 1798. It is composed of representatives from the congregational associations in the whole State, who choose a board of trustees for the management of their concerns. Their funds, arising from voluntary contribu-

tions, are respectable. The number of their missionaries in a year, has been as large as twelve or thirteen. They have been as successful as the missionaries of the General Assembly, with whom they act in concert, in spreading the gospel among the white inhabitants, on the frontiers of the country. They have also sent a minister of the gospel and a school-master, as missionaries, among the Chipeway Indians.

5. The society for propagating the gospel among the Indians and others in North America. This was instituted at Boston, in the state of Massachusetts, in the year 1787, in consequence of a commission being granted to certain gentlemen in that town, from the society in Scotland, for propagating Christian knowledge. Stimulated by this circumstance, a number of pious and public spirited individuals associated, and took the title given at the beginning of this article. They have had at their command funds to a pretty large amount, obtained from collections made from churches and individuals of that state, as well as from testamentary bequests of zealous christians. In the year 1798 they had three missionaries among the Indians. They had likewise a number of schools, in which the Indians were taught to read; and they had obtained the translation of a catechism into the Indian language, which was printed and distributed among those who were able to use it. Beside this, they had given away more than five hundred volumes of books, to such of the Indians as had been taught, or were learning to read.

They have also sent out several missionaries to preach the gospel to the white inhabitants, in the destitute parts of the state; and have distributed more than eight thousand volumes of pious books to the poor people, among whom the missionaries have laboured. Considerable success both among the Indians and the white people, has rewarded the exertions of this society.

6. The Massachusetts missionary society. This was instituted in the year 1799, and is yet in its infancy. Its funds, however, are encreasing, and in the summer of the year 1800 they had appointed four missionaries.

7. There are two other missionary societies in the state of Massachusetts, as well as one in the state of New-Jersey, of whose funds, efforts and prospects we regret that we are not yet able to make a statement.

8. The Moravian brethren, or society of the Unitas Fratrum. Of this institution it will be necessary to say but little, as their own account of the success of their missions is printed, and is well known to the Christian world. In this country they have not been less zealous than in other regions. Their labours among the Aboriginal nations of this continent have not only been unwearied, but probably more successful, than those of any other society of Christians.

9. The Baptists in the United States have been both zealous and successful in preaching the gospel among those who are perishing for lack of knowledge. On the frontiers of our country their exertions have been vigorous, and the effect of them great. They have not at present any person employed on an Indian mission. But among the black people in the southern part of the American union, they have a large number in the communion of their church. In the state of Georgia, in particular, they have two or three regularly organized churches, composed wholly or chiefly of the African race. They are also making arrangements to extend still more widely and systematically their missionary efforts.

10. The Westlean or Arminian methodists have been second to none in zeal and industry, in carrying the gospel to all who are deprived of it, except the Indians. Among the blacks and the poor people of European descent, whether in the interior, or on the borders of these states, perhaps none have been so frequently as they the pioneers of religion; and their ardent and unwearied exertions have added multitudes to the communion of their church. The leading religious opinions embraced by the various denominations who, as stated above, are engaged in missionary undertakings, are those which were generally taught and embraced at the reformation from popery: and in which the trinity and equality of persons in the undivided Godhead—the deep depravity of man by nature—the imputed righteousness of Christ, as the only meritorious cause of a sinner's justification in the sight of God—and the renovation of the human heart by the influences of the Holy Spirit of grace, as essentially necessary to genuine holiness—form the prominent and commanding features of the whole system. It should be mentioned, however, that these doctrines are held with various modifications by the several Christian denominations that have been specified; and that the Me-

thodists, in particular, attribute more than the other sects to the agency of man in the work of his salvation.

The civil government of this country has never thrown any impediment in the way of missionary enterprizes, and, in sending missions to the Indians, it has even afforded some assistance. Some of the officers of government have decidedly countenanced and encouraged the undertaking.

The great difficulty with us is, to obtain men well qualified for the office of missionaries, especially to the Indian tribes. This has much circumscribed the efforts that might, and that probably would, otherwise have been made. We hope, at present, that there is reason to expect that this hinderance will be diminished, if not wholly removed.

From the statement now finished you will perceive, that in the United States of America, the Great Head of the church has put it into the hearts of many of his people to labour, with diligence and earnestness, to extend the savor of their Redeemer's name, among the ignorant, the destitute, and the vicious; that their success has already been encouraging, and that their future prospects are highly animating.

Allow us now to propose to you a few questions, to which we would solicit your answers, as soon as you may find leisure to make, and opportunity to transmit them. The questions are the following—How long has your society existed? What were the circumstances and motives that led to its institution? What are your leading religious principles? What obstacles or difficulties have you had to surmount? Have any opposed you by writing, or by governmental interest? What are your funds? What is the number of your missionaries? Are they all men of education, or not? What instructions do you give to your missionaries? What are the places to which you have already sent missions, and what other places do you contemplate for them? What has been your success hitherto? What are your hopes and prospects for the future? What advice can you give to us? By answers to these inquiries, and by any other useful remarks that you may think proper to make, you will greatly oblige us.

We have nothing further to add, but our intreaties and our hopes that your prayers may be united with ours, and most fervently offered at the throne of grace, that God may give the heathen to his son for an inheritance, and the ut-

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The civil government of this country has never thrown any impediment in the way of missionary enterprizes, and, in sending missions to the Indians, it has even afforded some assistance. Some of the officers of government have decidedly countenanced and encouraged the undertaking.

The great difficulty with us is, to obtain men well qualified for the office of missionaries, especially to the Indian tribes. This has much circumscribed the efforts that might, and that probably would, otherwise have been made. We hope, at present, that there is reason to expect that this hinderance will be diminished, if not wholly removed.

From the statement now finished you will perceive, that in the United States of America, the Great Head of the church has put it into the hearts of many of his people to labour, with diligence and earnestness, to extend the savor of their Redeemer's name, among the ignorant, the destitute, and the vicious; that their success has already been encouraging, and that their future prospects are highly animating.

Allow us now to propose to you a few questions, to which we would solicit your answers, as soon as you may find leisure to make, and opportunity to transmit them. The questions are the following—How long has your society existed? What were the circumstances and motives that led to its institution? What are your leading religious principles? What obstacles or difficulties have you had to surmount? Have any opposed you by writing, or by governmental interest? What are your funds? What is the number of your missionaries? Are they all men of education, or not? What instructions do you give to your missionaries? What are the places to which you have already sent missions, and what other places do you contemplate for them? What has been your success hitherto? What are your hopes and prospects for the future? What advice can you give to us? By answers to these inquiries, and by any other useful remarks that you may think proper to make, you will greatly oblige us.

We have nothing further to add, but our intreaties and our hopes that your prayers may be united with ours, and most fervently offered at the throne of grace, that God may give the heathen to his son for an inheritance, and the ut-

termost parts of the earth for his possession: and that he may speedily become king of nations as he is king of saints.

By order, and on behalf of the standing committte of missions.

ASHBEL GREEN, *Chairman.*

THE committee addressed to the several Presbyteries which look to the Assembly for the management of their missionary concerns, a letter, of which the following is an extract :—

" Missionaries for the frontiers—missionaries for the Indian tribes—and the places or regions demanding missionary labours—are the three articles, in regard to which information is solicited.

Missionaries for the frontiers may be either licensed candidates, or ordained ministers. But their characters and talents ought to be of the most unexceptionable kind. Much will depend on this. It is a mistake to suppose that men of inferior qualifications will generally serve for missionaries. They will serve better for stated pastors, in places regularly supplied with the gospel. Those who are to make the first impressions should be calculated to make them favourably ; and to rouse the inhabitants of the ungospelized parts of our country to attention, is of the utmost moment. To this work men of the most distinguished piety and ability ought to be sent. They will be most likely to make the careless respect religion, and to engage them to lay to heart the things that belong to their everlasting peace. And as it is desirable that to other advantages, those derived from years and standing in the church should be added, it is much to be wished that some ordained ministers of the first reputation and influence, should be missionaries.

Missionaries for the Indians are a great desideratum with the Assembly. The hope of contributing to send the gospel among the Heathen tribes, prompted the liberality of many who have contributed most largely to the funds which the Assembly have at command ; and it was with deep regret that the last Assembly found that they had not a single candidate for an Indian mission. If your Presbytery can nominate one who is well qualified, it will indeed be an important acquisition. Piety, prudence, patience, and perseverance, must be his qualifications. Other talents are here of less importance. Even the want of an academical edu-

cation, if he be a man of some general knowledge and good understanding, is not material, at least it is not essential, in one who may go forth in the character of a catechist.

Places or regions calling for missionary labours, you are also requested to specify. Many of these are known already; more indeed than there are missionaries to supply, or funds to support the necessary missionaries, if they could be found. Yet as it is hoped that the funds will increase, and it is desirable that a complete view should be taken of the portions of our country needing the instructions of the gospel, you will please to notice such as lie more immediately under your observation; stating as particularly as you can, the degree of their necessity, and mentioning only those whose necessity is considerable, and incapable of being supplied by Presbyteries and synods."

NINTH GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

May 11, 12, and 13, 1803.

SOLOMON describes the return of spring in terms equally applicable to the present season, both in a literal and spiritual sense: "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." The pleasures of spring naturally lead us to anticipate the joys of harvest; and it is doubly pleasing to the Christian mind to look forward, not only to a harvest in the world, but a richer harvest in the church. This is a pleasure now annually enjoyed by the members and friends of the Missionary Society; for may we not apply to them the animating words of our adorable Saviour—"Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest?" We cannot but indulge the cheering hope, that the seed of the word, which this Society, and other religious bodies, are sowing in various countries, will produce, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, a glorious harvest of converted Heathens. Possessed of this hope, it is always with pleasure we present to our readers a detailed account of the anniversary Meetings of the Society.

The first public Meeting was at Surry Chapel, on Wednesday, the 11th of May. The prayers of the Established Church were read by the Rev. Mr. Hill; Mr. Weaver, of Shrewsbury, prayed before sermon; Mr. Bottomley, of Scarborough preached on Rom. ii. 7. "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life." After the sermon, an extract from the Annual Report of the Directors was read by Mr. Burder, for the general information of the Religious Public.—Mr. Humphries, of Hammersmith concluded with prayer.

On Wednesday evening, Mr. Young, of Canterbury (not as formerly mentioned by mistake, of Ebley) preached at the Tabernacle, from Rom. xv. 20, 21. "So have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation; but as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand." Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, prayed before sermon; and Mr. Mantell, of Westbury, after it.

On Thursday evening, at Tottenham-court Chapel, after the prayers of the Church, Mr. Gr. Ewing, of Glasgow, preached on Acts xvii. 30, 31. "And the times of this ignorance, God winked at; but now commandeth all men, every where, to repent; because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Mr. Williams, of Birmingham, prayed before sermon; and Mr. Wigton, from Scotland, after it.

On Friday morning, the public service was at St. Paul's Church, Shadwell. After prayers, which were read by the Rev. Mr. Winkworth, the Rev. Jeremiah Newell, Vicar of Great Missenden, and Perpetual Curate of Lee, Bucks; preached from Acts xxii. 21. "And he said unto me, Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

We have the pleasure to say, that these Sermons will be published at as early a period as possible, together with the Report at large, which will be found peculiarly interesting.

Appropriate Hymns, from the Missionary Collection, were sung at the various places of worship; and were given out by Messrs. Paul, Legget, Thornton, Dunn, Sabine, M'All, Kent, Philip, Arnold, Moreel, Tracy, Frome, Lowell, and Hinxsman.

The Sacramental Festival, on Friday evening, at Zion-chapel, crowned the public religious services of the Anniversary. The ministers who engaged in prayer and exhortation were Dr. Haweis, Mr. Collier, Mr. Cooke, Dr. Kemp, Mr. Ball, Mr. Bogue, and Mr. R. Hill, who closed the solemnity. A great number of ministers assisted in the distribution of the elements; among whom we recollect Messrs. Greatheed, Hopkins, Williams, of Stepney; Bickerdyke, Brooksbank, Cockin, M'All, Jackson, J. A. Knight, Jones, Towers, Ewing, J. Townsend, Buck, Fowler, Platt, Weston, Knight, Adams, &c. The scene was solemn and grand beyond description, and afforded a delightful resemblance of that celestial place, where the union of all the followers of the Lamb shall be complete and everlasting.

The number of ministers who were collected from various parts of the kingdom, was thought to be greater than on any former occasion; and such was the desire of the friends of the Society to enjoy the public services, that the large chapels, in which they were held, were crowded long before the time appointed; and a great many were unable to procure admittance.—This, we trust, may be considered as an indication that the desire of communicating the word of life to the Heathen, is a steady and increasing principle in the hearts of God's people, and will continue to produce the most energetic efforts for the good of mankind. Already has the Lord vouchsafed to smile on the sacred work; and the Report of the Directors affords the most pleasing evidence that the labours of the Society have been far from being fruitless.

The Meetings of the Society for the dispatch of business were held at the usual time at Mr. Brooksbanks, in Staining Lane.—The Thanks of the body were voted to the Directors, to the Preachers, and to the Treasurer (Mr. Hardcastle) who was requested to continue his valuable services in that department. The Rev. George Burder was unanimously chosen Secretary to the Society, in the room of the late pious and useful Mr. Eyre, of Hackney, whose talents and influence contributed much to the first formation and gradual progress of the institution; and whose death is most sincerely lamented by all who knew his uncommon worth.

To accommodate a number of friends who attended at Shadwell-church on Friday morning, and who were to assemble in the afternoon at Zion-chapel for business, a cold

collation was provided at Sun-tavern Fields, by the hospitality of Mr. Sims: and about seventy persons enjoyed the social refreshment.

REPORT

BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL *IN SCOTLAND:*

From January 1802, to May 15, 1803.

THE Public are already in possession of several reports published by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, in which their proceedings for four years have been regularly related. For the satisfaction of those who have contributed to their support, and for the information of all their Christian brethren, they now communicate the following outline of these during the last year.

In the Society's last report, dated Dec. 1801, they informed their friends, that they had the prospect, by the beginning of the ensuing March, of engaging a very considerable number of labourers in addition to more than thirty formerly sent out; and that it was intended a number of these should go to Ireland. This prospect was realized. At the above period, fifteen missionaries were sent to Ireland*, and thirty-seven into different parts of Scotland. Some of them, being acquainted with the Gaelic language, were stationed in the High-lands. In July last, eighteen others were taken into the Society's service; so that the whole number sent out, then exceeded one hundred, of whom ninety-eight had received education for the ministry. A few of the number, not qualified for the work, have retired from the service; most of these, however, are engaged in teaching schools in different parts of this country and of Ireland. The rest continue labouring in the ministry of the

* The greater part of these were sent to the North of Ireland, and placed under the Ulster Society. Concerning them, Mr. Hamilton, of Armagh, in a letter dated from that place, March 14, 1803, says, "At our meeting of Committee on the 2nd of this month, we had a good attendance, and from every quarter the reports given into the Committee in writing were of the most pleasing and animating description. Our Lord has indeed graciously owned the young men in their labours, and given them much favour in the eyes of the people. Every place was earnest to have their own preacher continued with them, and the young men seem well disposed to stay."

word, part under the Society, and others wholly supported by the people to whom they preach.—The Society have likewise enjoyed, as formerly, the occasional assistance of ministers from England, who have favoured them with their services as far as their stated labours on the Lord's day permitted. They have also defrayed the charges of several pious ministers, indeed of as many as have applied for assistance, in various parts of Scotland, while itinerating in their respective neighbourhoods; a method of diffusing the knowledge of the truth, which, in many cases, has been attended with the happiest effects.—The Society continue to distribute, gratis, catechisms and tracts in Gaelic and English.

Great care has been taken in selecting proper missionaries, and in watching over the conduct of those in the service of the Society. The good effects of their caution in this respect, they have hitherto experienced in a very remarkable manner; for which, especially when they consider the number they have sent out, they desire to return unfeigned thanks to God. Indeed, the increasing solicitations for their missionaries from all parts of the country, which the Society exceedingly regret they are not as yet able to answer, sufficiently shew the general estimation in which their labourers are held, and the favour the Lord has given them in the eyes of the people. It is also a pleasing testimony borne to their general plan.

Although the Society cannot exert themselves so extensively as they could wish, or as circumstances require; yet they have already been able pretty fully to explore the religious state of this country, almost every part of which, including Shetland, Orkney, and the Western Islands, has now been visited by the preachers connected with them. In this extensive tract, it is now ascertained that there are several places where the uncorrupted gospel had not been heard for many years. In such situations, however, the people have in general received their visits with thankfulness, and have eagerly solicited a renewal of them.

By letters lately received from the preachers, it appears, that at almost every station some good has been done. Attention to the gospel has been very generally excited, a visible reformation has in many cases taken place, and sinners have been converted from the error of their way. The Society would willingly communicate to their Christian breth-

ren extracts from many of these letters; but as it would greatly exceed the bounds of this report, they content themselves with subjoining accounts of *four* places, where it appears that more than *four hundred* persons have been brought from darkness to light, a circumstance which they are persuaded will afford the liveliest joy to all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity.

Together with these reports, they, as usual, give an abstract of their annual receipt and expenditure. They need scarcely repeat that they set out on the principle of laying up no fund. To this they have steadily adhered. Being a religious society, supported by public contributions, they consider it their duty to continue thus to act. They entirely disapprove of that mode of management, by which the exertions of *to-day* are cramped by taking anxious thought for *to-morrow*, which seems to be a mistrusting of that grace whereby the Lord makes his people to abound in the fruits of righteousness. If money subscribed for the immediate service of the Redeemer be directly applied to its proper object, it is calculated to produce considerable effects. These effects, as they rejoice the heart, so they warm the zeal of all who have contributed. Their fellow Christians, who, in doubt perhaps, stood back at first, are now provoked to love and to similar good works; while such persons as have experienced the blessed effects derived from the enjoyment of the means of grace thus provided, become a new band enlisted, as it were, in the same cause, and ready to promote the same great end. The consequence of the whole is an increase of like exertions; the talent subscribed is not buried, the current of liberality is neither checked nor diverted, more is every day brought into the gospel treasury, and the money advanced is immediately applied to its destined use. Thus, no unnecessary burden is laid on the present generation; temptations occasioned by the possession of an ample fund are not thrown in the way; and contributors are not deluded by the vain imagination of being able to occupy their talents after death, or of working when the night is come, but having served their day and generation, and entered into rest, they gladly resign the concerns of his own kingdom to him who liveth and reigneth evermore. On these grounds this Society is persuaded, that the more speedily they can transfer the money intrusted to them from their hands to their Master's service, by which, from being

a treasure on earth, it becomes a treasure in heaven, the more effectually they promote the advantage of the donors, the more faithfully they fulfil the charge committed to them, and the more surely and extensively they lay a foundation for future necessary supplies. Acting on such principles, and not hesitating to enter any new field of probable usefulness, they have often indeed been reduced to a very small sum; yet they have been upheld, and as their necessities were, so has been their support. They have at the same time considered it a duty to study as far as they consistently could, the most exact economy*, by which, together with always endeavouring to excite the people in different quarters to assist, according to their power, in supplying themselves, they have hitherto carried on their extensive operations, although the whole sum they have received from the beginning be only L. 2683 : 5 : 11. of which L. 356 : 0 : 9 has been paid for tracts, &c. distributed gratis.

By means of this Society, the gospel has been gladly received in many remote villages where formerly no inquiry was made after it, and where the people were too poor to support a preacher; but who now doing as much as they are able themselves, look to this Institution to make up what more is needful, and are abundantly supplied with the means of grace. Many of these must, of course, still depend on the Society's aid, which, as far as they shall be enabled, they will continue to afford. As soon as more labourers can be procured, and provided it is the intention of the Society to extend, in the same manner, its assistance to others, of which many stand so much in need.

Stimulated, then by the state of the country, and by the success which has hitherto attended their operations, the Society determine, by the help of God, to double their diligence in the important work in which they are engaged. Flattering themselves that they have the confidence of their brethren, they think they have a strong claim on their attention. The Society has been in existence only five years and a half. They have during that period, encountered many difficulties; but they may venture to affirm, that in few instances (to God be all the glory !) has more been done to promote the interests of the gospel, nor have attempts been followed with more remarkable success. They earnestly solicit the attention of their brethren to what has been stated,

* Not the smallest remuneration is ever given to any who hold offices in the Society for their trouble, which is sometimes considerable.

and to the communications hereto subjoined, for they are fully persuaded, that, were Christians duly to consider the utility of this institution, and the great need of such a society in Scotland, they would contribute to its support with much more liberality than they have hitherto done.

Intelligence communicated to the Secretary.

My dear Sir, Dunkeld, April 14, 1803.

I now sit down in order to answer your request; and while I do so, I cannot help expressing my fears, lest more should be said than may at last be found to stand the trial. In reading the accounts which other societies have given of this kind, I have been often afraid, that they were exaggerated. The accounts of the Methodists, particularly, have appeared to me in this light, especially when I consider their slackness of dicipline. The rocks on which others have struck, ought to be cautiously avoided by us; for, not to say what evil may follow exaggeration in these things now, it will be an awful disappointment to us at last, if we find, that we have, upon too slender evidence, received as believers those whom the Lord will separate from his sheep, in that important day which awaits us all. Though I thus express my fears, lest too much should be said in this way, and appearances rested upon instead of evidence, I am convinced from the example of the first believers, that it is our duty to observe the doings of the Lord; and also to make them known to others. All who love Jesus, and have a proper concern for precious souls, must rejoice to hear that the word has in any instance proved effectual. It caused great joy among the churches, when the apostles related to them the success which the Lord was pleased to give them, in the various places where they preached the word; and it cannot fail to comfort the hearts of the Society, and encourage them to go on with renewed endeavours, when they hear how the Lord has blessed their attempts to promote his glory.

From every thing that I can learn, this was a most destitute place when the Society began its operations. It will not admit of a doubt, that the gospel had not been faithfully preached for a long time past; and one circumstance was peculiarly unfavourable to a district in the neighbourhood, few of the old people understood the English, and so far as I can learn, their ministers could not speak Gaelic; so that the poor people were in the grossest ignorance that you can imagine. They went to church according to custom; but

were as ignorant of what was said, as the votaries of Rome are when their priests perform mass in an unknown tongue. I have had the best opportunity of knowing about many in this place, and have found, not only the old, who perhaps could neither read nor speak English, but also the young, who knew something of both, completely ignorant of the letter of the word except some passages which had been handed down time immemorial, by tradition, to sanction a variety of rites, evidently the fruits of the man of sin, which they observed with all the superstitious devotion of Roman catholics. The town might be said, at least as to some of the people, to be something more enlightened; but the grossest ignorance as to the need men have of a Saviour, and who that Saviour is, almost universally prevailed; they indeed professed to know God, but in works they denied him. There was, and still is, a meeting of those who are called Glassites here. At one time they were pretty numerous, and, I trust there were good people among them; but as far as I can judge, their religion chiefly consisted in being very strict in observing the outworks of Christianity.

There was at one time a meeting of the Wesleyan Methodists here; and though, from what I have said above, you will see, that I do not readily credit their reports with regard to their converts, I have not the least doubt but a goodly number were brought to the knowledge of the truth by their means. I have heard good accounts of many who were gone the way of all the earth, before I came here; and there are some with whom I am acquainted, who give decided evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a considerable time since the meeting was given up, and the few who remained, though they were in the way, with regard to many things groped much in the dark. Some of them, however, have given evidence that they were disposed to receive the light as soon as it shone more clearly.

There is another circumstance which I must not overlook, viz. that some, who, in pursuit of daily bread, or with a view to get more insight into the trades, had gone to the low country, where the gospel was preached, were thereby led to Jesus. After they returned, they found themselves uncomfortable, but excused themselves for joining with their mother-church, because they were so far removed from those societies which walked nearer the truth. I however find, that as soon as the gospel was preached here, they gave it their decided approbation.

Mr. Bogue of Gosport was the first itinerant who preached here. I have heard of but one who was led to think seriously that day. The Society afterwards sent a great number of preachers to this place, who occasionally laboured among the people with much success.

You have already heard of Dowally, in the neighbourhood of Dunkeld. There were a few when I went there who had been benefited by our brethren. I advised them to begin a prayer meeting, which, I think, was the chief means of awakening the attention of that careless place. For some time there were some impressed at every meeting; for the people crowded in upon them, and as soon as they were impresed they immediately attended with us. Some say, that the time I have been speaking the word, the Lord was pleased to bless it to them, and I have every reason to believe, that my labours have been countenanced for establishing the Lord's children. As to the work of conversion here, the Lord has given me the honour of being the instrument to many. In conversing with people I have found, the Messrs Aikman, Haldane, Ewing, Innes, Garie, Hey from Bristol, and Hay who was at Mr. Innes' class in Dundee, but hath entered into his rest, and perhaps others who just now escape my memory, have all been honoured as the means in the hand of the Spirit, by declaring the truth, of bringing poor sinners to Jesus. I have been as accurate as I could, and find, that (keeping off Moulin, and those who were brought to the knowledge of the truth by other means,) there have been *one hundred and forty five*, who have experienced the power of divine grace upon their souls, by means of the Society's preachers, since Mr Bogue preached here. I only speak of those who either have been, or now are members with us. I have taken in those who have left us and gone to other churches. But I have great reason to believe that many have been benefited who have not come under my notice; and some who have not joined us, give good evidence of having something of the truth, though they have not yet come into close conversation with me. I trust I have not exceeded in my statement. I have had no design to impose upon you or any, remembering that the day will declare it.

My dear sir, yours sincerely, for Jesus' sake,

JOHN CAMPBELL.

(Pastor of the Church at Dunkeld.)